

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

NR Eligible: yes _____
no ☒

Property Name: Lower Cedar Point Inventory Number: CH-204
Address: East shore of Potomac River, south of US 301 Historic district: yes ☒ no
City: Newburg Zip Code: 20664 County: Charles
USGS Quadrangle(s): Colonial Beach North
Property Owner: Unknown Tax Account ID Number: Unknown
Tax Map Parcel Number(s): Unknown Tax Map Number: Unknown
Project: Nice Bridge Improvement Project Agency: Maryland Transportation Authority
Agency Prepared By: A.D. Marble & Company
Preparer's Name: Emma Young Date Prepared: 1/16/2008

Documentation is presented in: Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties, CH-204, on file at the Maryland Historical Trust, Crownsville, Maryland.

Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation: _____ Eligibility recommended ☒ Eligibility not recommended
Criteria: A B C D Considerations: A B C D E F G

Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property:

Name of the District/Property: _____

Inventory Number: _____ Eligible: yes Listed: yes

Site visit by MHT Staff yes ☒ no Name: _____ Date: _____

Description of Property and Justification: *(Please attach map and photo)*

Lower Cedar Point is the name ascribed to an approximately twelve-acre peninsula located at the southwestern end of Morgantown Road adjacent to the eastern shore of the Potomac River in Charles County, Maryland. A long gravel driveway leads north from the terminus of Morgantown Road to provide access to the peninsula. The area was previously identified in the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties. The previous documentation consists of a brief paragraph, the author and date of which are unknown.

Lower Cedar Point contains minimal evidence of its former function as a summer resort. According to local landowner, Mr. Russell Karrow (13410 Beach Haven Circle), Lower Cedar Point previously included a two-story dwelling that was destroyed by fire around 1990. The remainder of the buildings consisted of small one-story sheds that were removed after Hurricane Isabelle in 2003 (Karrow, 9 January 2007). A long timber wharf, constructed circa 1950, stretches west from the peninsula into the Potomac River. The remainder of the peninsula contains sandy areas interspersed with evergreen shrubs and a variety of mature evergreen and deciduous trees.

Lower Cedar Point is no longer used as a recreational area and access is limited.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended _____ Eligibility not recommended ☒
Criteria: A B C D Considerations: A B C D E F G

MHT Comments:

John J. ...
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

...
Reviewer, National Register Program

8/18/08
Date

8/18/08
Date

260801408

Resource History:

In February 1766, George Washington's schooner reportedly ran aground on dangerous shoals located off of Lower Cedar Point. Summer vacationers, mainly traveling from Washington, D.C., enjoyed the peninsula's beaches long after Washington's visit. Ferry service allowed visitors to travel from Virginia directly to the shores beginning in the mid nineteenth century. Simon J. Martenet identifies the area as "Lower Cedar Point" in his 1865 Atlas of Charles County, Maryland. No structures are shown on the atlas. An item in the 1899 Maryland Independent notes that the J.W. Thompson steamer brought more than 600 visitors from Washington, D.C. one Sunday and attracted over 100 local residents (Morgantown vertical file, King George County Historical Society, King George County, Virginia). From the 1920s until the opening of the Potomac River Bridge (Nice Bridge, US 301) in 1940, Captain John Quincy Adams ran two ferries between Potomac Beach in Virginia and Cedar Point bringing as many as 6,000 vacationers throughout a season. The last ferry, the Lord Baltimore, was retired in 1942 and precipitated the continual decline of the area as a summer vacation spot.

The geography of Cedar Point, named for the cluster of cedar trees that grew on the peninsula, continues to change as storms and hurricanes have eroded much of the sand along the 2,400 feet of waterfront. Hurricane Isabelle destroyed the last vestiges of the area's former resort status as the 2003 hurricane necessitated the demolition of all of the remaining structures on the peninsula. The presence of the Naval Warfare Surface Center at Dahlgren located across the river in King George County, Virginia, has also deterred visitors to the peninsula.

In 2008, Lower Cedar Point appears to be privately owned and access is limited to local residents of Morgantown.

Significance Evaluation:

Lower Cedar Point, located to the south of US 301 on the eastern shore of the Potomac River in the vicinity of Morgantown, Charles County, Maryland, is not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

According to the National Register of Historic Places guidelines established by the National Park Service, the quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

- A. that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- B. that are associated with lives of significant persons in our past;
- C. that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction; or
- D. that have yielded or may be likely to yield information important in history or prehistory (National Park Service 1997).

Lower Cedar Point is not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A. The property is not associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history. The property does not retain any features associated with the agricultural, social, or recreational development of Charles County.

Lower Cedar Point is not eligible under Criterion B as it had no known association with the lives of individuals of historical importance. Although the area is known for its association with George Washington, the area does not best commemorate or illustrate his productive life.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended _____

Eligibility not recommended _____

Criteria: ___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D Considerations: ___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D ___ E ___ F ___ G

MHT Comments:

Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services_____
Date_____
Reviewer, National Register Program_____
Date

Lower Cedar Point is not eligible under Criterion C because it lacks the distinctiveness necessary to qualify it for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The peninsula does not retain any physical features or structures that embody a distinctive type, period, or method of construction nor does it represent the work of a master or contain high artistic values.

The property was not evaluated for eligibility under Criterion D as part of the architectural survey and evaluation.

Lower Cedar Point does not retain a high level of integrity from the period of its popularity as a summer vacation area (1890-1942). The property retains integrity of location and setting as a rural area located along the eastern shore of the Potomac River. However, the area does not retain integrity of design, workmanship, or materials as the structures associated with its recreational use are no longer extant. Therefore, the area no longer possesses integrity of association and feeling as summer vacation area popular from the late-nineteenth century until the 1940s.

References

Karrow, Russell

Interview with Bryan Butina, A.D. Marble & Company, 9 January 2007. Notes on file in Owings Mills, Maryland.

King George County Historical Society

Morgantown Vertical File, King George County, Virginia.

Martenet, Simon J.

1865 Atlas of Charles County, Maryland. Simon J. Martenet: Baltimore, Maryland.

National Park Service

1997 National Register Bulletin: how to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation. U.S. Department of the Interior: Washington, D.C.

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MHT Comments:

Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

Date

Reviewer, National Register Program

Date

Lower Cedar Point, CH-204

Morgantown, Maryland



2,000 0 2,000
Feet

Resource

Map Source: USGS 7.5' DRGs:
Colonial Beach North, MD.



CH-204

LOWER CEDAR POINT

Charles County, MARYLAND

B. Butina

01.2008

MD SHPO

003215 3/13 (SR10 11)

view to north

Photo 1 of 3

2 00 M0 Y0 D0 01/14/08



CH-204

Lower cedar Point

Charles County, MARYLAND

B. Butina

01.2008

003215 4/13 <SR10 11>

MD SHPO

view to northeast

Photo # 2 of 3

3 00 M0 Y0 D0 01/14/08



CH-204

Lower cedar Point

Charles county, MARYLAND

B. Butina

01.2008

MD SHPO

003215 5/13 (5R10 11)

view to northwest

Photo # 3 of 3

4 00 M0 Y0 D0 01/14/08

CH-204
Lower Cedar Point
Morgantown
Private

18th century

George Washington mentions in his diary a fishing excursion here in 1781. During the Victorian era, Lower Cedar Point was popular as a resort area and is still maintained for camping and picnicking during the summer months, although most of the Victorian era park structures have been demolished.